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## COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request

Date: April 14, 2020

### **Contact Information**

Organization Name: Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania, Inc.  
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### **In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:**

- 1. What geographic area is served? (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)**
- 2. What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?**
- 3. How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?**

Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania (GSEP) serves approximately 40,000 girls, ages 5-17, from Berks, Bucks, Carbon, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, and Philadelphia counties annually. During this Membership Year, our organization has served over 3,200 girls across Chester County alone with a variety of programs, including camp, community service opportunities, and troop and series programming. In order to maintain the principles of diversity and inclusion our organization was founded on, GSEP also offers Funded Initiatives, which serve girls from low-income communities in order to provide them with the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) at no cost. Girls in this program can choose from a variety of program pathways in the areas of STEM, Life Skills, the Outdoors, and Entrepreneurship to develop their leadership skills, using a researched-based curriculum as a guide.

During this time of great uncertainty, Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania (GSEP) recognizes the importance of remaining adaptable to community needs. In addition to the unprecedented financial burdens our community is facing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, families are suddenly tasked with the novel challenge of homeschooling their children as schools across Pennsylvania are mandated to close their doors. GSEP has always partnered with parent volunteers, schools, and local community organizations to provide supplemental educational resources to almost 40,000 girls across our nine-county footprint, and will continue its efforts virtually during this time.

Quality out-of-school-time youth development programming is important now more than ever, which is why GSEP is committed to fulfilling this need in the communities we serve. Our organization has worked to re-design our research-based GSLE curriculum to be delivered virtually by trained staff and volunteers. During the first week of our new programming, every meeting time slot was completely filled by girls and parents eager to participate. We have already served over 3,000 girls in the first two weeks, and this increased demand led GSEP to expand its offerings for proceeding weeks. GSEP respectfully requests a grant of \$2,500 (less than 1% of our annual operating budget) for the current fiscal year, which runs from October 1, 2019, to September 30, 2020. Funding will be used to help us grow our virtual platform in which girls can learn from the full GSLE curriculum, have virtual troop meetings to connect with their peers during this time of social isolation, and stay engaged with GSEP's camp corner. Our goal is to keep girls engaged and intellectually stimulated, particularly at a time when they are out of school.

Our organization is actively investigating creative ways to partner with local school districts we already serve to deliver our funded series programming to girls from low-income communities. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, GSEP partnered with various school districts and community organizations throughout Chester County, including Chester County Family Academy to engage girls who are eligible to receive free and reduced-price lunch in the full Girl Scouting Experience at no cost. As we are now forced to shift our programming, girls in our funded initiatives are left without this structured curriculum, but funding could help to revitalize these programs in a digital platform.

In addition to virtual programming, GSEP is in the process of coordinating with various community sites to donate our remaining cookie inventory to families in need, while actively working with donors to secure technology and Internet access, so every girl can participate in virtual programming. At the core of GSEP's mission is to build all girls (regardless of race, background, or socioeconomic status) into girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Therefore, as an organization, we are committed to providing equitable resources for the girls and families we serve at all times, but especially during a time of crisis.

Organizations across Pennsylvania will suffer from lost revenue as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including GSEP. Our organization is projected to finish the fiscal year with \$1,568,437.00 less than anticipated, but we are actively striving to recover from this financial hardship through available loan and grant opportunities. This projected amount may increase significantly by the end of April if we make the difficult decision to cancel our camp season for the health and safety of our girls. GSEP knows that the girls we serve deserve a continued resource that meets their social and emotional needs, which is why our organization is doing everything possible to fulfill our mission, despite current circumstances.

Please email [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)

- \_\_\_\_\_ This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit
- \_\_\_\_\_ 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation's website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources.

Grants will be processed a few times monthly.

We estimate mini-grants will range from \$500 to \$5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org).  
Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.